

MARICOPA COUNTY
DEPARTMENTAL QUARTERLY REPORT
Third Quarter Report, FY 1999-00
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Goals	Accomplishments/Comments
Examinations completed within 24 hours of admission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This goal is no longer being met due to the resignations of two OME pathologists in January and February. The current shortage of Medical Examiners to conduct exams has resulted in cases being held over to the following day during the week, as well as weekends.
Autopsies performed on all homicides, acute trauma, childhood fatalities, unexplained and suspicious deaths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autopsies continue to be performed on all homicides and childhood fatalities. The shortage of pathologists has caused a slight decline in the overall autopsy rate for other types of cases.
90% of reports completed within 45 days and 100% within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 86% of cases closed within 90 days and the average time to case closure was 60 days during this past quarter. This is a decline from an average 64 days during the second quarter. Case closure times had begun to decline with the addition of two new pathologists in September. With the loss of two more pathologists, the timeframes are expected to rise over the next several months until Medical Examiner positions are fully staffed.
Toxicology test results reported within 2 weeks on 90% of cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toxicology lab personnel met their interim goal of reporting test results on 90% of the cases within 45 days. The annual goal of reporting 90% of cases within 30 days is expected to be met by the end of this fiscal year.
Initial transcription completed within two weeks of receipt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This goal was being met and exceeded until the loss of two transcribers in January created a backlog of four to five weeks for transcription. The two transcription vacancies were filled in March and the backlog is gradually being reduced. It is anticipated that this goal will be met once again early in the next quarter.
Next of kin contacted by Medical Investigators on all OME cases within 72 hours of admission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Family Liaison was hired during this past quarter and family members are being contacted and advised of the decedent's case status within 72 hours of admission.
Medical investigation summaries completed in 100% of required cases within 24 hours of admission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a 3-year goal for the Medical Investigations unit. The addition of two new Medical Investigators in February has resulted in a rise in medical investigation summaries being completed from 40% in the last quarter to 86% by the end of this quarter.

<p>Other activities and accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IT upgrades b. Equipment replacement c. New facility planning d. Temporary modular offices e. Lease of refrigeration space f. Filling Medical Examiner vacancies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The installation of a Windows based case tracking system and conversion of data was completed in early December. Further refinements of the new software were begun this quarter and will be completed by the end of this fiscal year. b. The procurement process was completed and a contract to replace three vans with customized, hydraulic vans was approved this quarter. Delivery of the new vans is expected by June. The customized vans will double current van capacity. c. The conceptual planning and design phase of the new Forensic Science Center was completed and an increase in gross square feet from 40,000 to 61,700 was recommended. d. The OME modular offices were completed and the move into the new space occurred in February. The modular office space allowed OME office staff to move out of the FMD building and provides private offices for five pathologists. This has alleviated the overcrowded, shared offices in the main OME building. e. An interdepartmental agreement with MIHS to rent refrigerated space from the MMC warehouse was finalized and approved. Security fencing and shelving has been installed in the rented space and specimens have been moved. The additional rented space will allow specimens to be stored for longer than one year. f. The available Medical Examiner openings have been advertised, interviews have been conducted and offers have been extended. Due to the length of time needed to recruit and for selected candidates to obtain Arizona medical licenses, all positions are not expected be filled until late August or early September.
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